Factors Inhibiting Effective Management of Primary Schools in Nigeria: The Case of Ebonyi State

Chux Gervase Iwu[1] and Ita Chimezie Iwu[2]

[1]Business Faculty, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa
E-mail:iwuc@cput.ac.za
[2]Best Foundation Group of Schools, Apata, Ibadan, Nigeria
E-mail: clifranc@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT This study aimed at identifying some of the problems militating against effective management of primary schools in Afikpo South local government area in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. A self-administered questionnaire containing eight research questions with twenty-four (24) questionnaire items was utilised for this study. The study found, among others that, high numbers of enrolment put pressure on meagre school facilities, while heads of schools, teachers and pupils are affected by a general lack of facilities. This is exemplified by some schools where classes took place outside the normal classrooms and in some cases, outside the school compound. The authors insist that provision of adequate and qualified teachers must be a conscious programme of both government and heads of schools because the successful administration of primary schools is possible with qualified and dedicated teachers, well equipped primary schools, expansion of schools to accommodate the increasing enrolment of pupils and a co-operative community incorporating parents of pupils.

INTRODUCTION

Education has remained a social process in capacity building and maintenance of society for decades, as well as a weapon for acquiring skills, relevant knowledge and habits for surviving in the changing world (Adepoju and Fabiyi 2007). According to Adesina (2011), education is a major force in economic, intellectual, social and cultural empowerment. He goes on to say that education has the capacity to bring about character and attitudinal change, as well as reshape human potential for desired development.

Given the above, it is safe to say that primary education is very important in the Nigerian education system. The significance of primary education is also located in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals declaration – an achievement of universal access to education by 2015 (Adepoju and Fabiyi 2007). Quadri (2001) presents the following intentions of primary education in Nigeria: (1) to help the child to develop intellectually, physically, morally, socially and emotionally; (2) to produce well-qualified citizens that are capable of going to secondary and tertiary institutions to be trained as professionals in various services that are essential for the

development of the country; and (3) to assist primary school learners who cannot further their education to become useful citizens to themselves and community at large. No doubt therefore that primary education is the foundation upon which other strata of educational edifice are built (Oni 2009). Adesina (2011) adds that primary education serves as the foundational level of all other education by providing children with a good preparatory ground for further education. Essentially, primary education can be considered as the most important period in the education of a child. The government of Nigeria perhaps meant well when it emphasised the place of primary education in its 1977 National Policy on Education (NPE) as follows:

1. Inculcation of permanent literary and numeracy and the ability of communicate;
2. Laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
3. Citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
4. Character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes.

The policy, which was launched in 1977, was revised in 1985 to include free primary education among others (Amaghionyeodiwe and Osinubi 2006: 32). With the introduction of free primary education, one can argue that educa-

---
Address for correspondence:
E-mail: iwuc@cput.ac.za, clifranc@yahoo.com

tion is then easier to access. Igbuzor (2006) disagrees. In a keynote address to Civil Society Action Coalition in July 2006, Igbuzor frowned at the 2005 Nigeria Millennium Development Goals report, which hinted that literacy level in the country had experienced an all-time low. A review of the NPE in 2004 added the following specific objectives:

1. Developing in the child the ability to adapt to his changing environment;
2. Giving the child the opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him function effectively in the society within the limit of his capacity; and
3. Providing basic tools for further educational advancement including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Heads of primary schools are tasked with the implications of these objectives. The success of primary school education rests on a good administration involving the local communities, well qualified and contented staff, adequate funds for equipment and facilities together with interested parents supplying children's material needs and bringing home training to supplement the efforts at school. For heads of schools to succeed in the administration of primary schools, they need the co-operation and support of the parents, teachers, the primary schools board and the ministry of education.

Odia and Omofonmwan (2007) state rather sullenly that education in Nigeria is besieged by colossal problems such as poor funding, poor educational infrastructure – including inadequate classrooms, unqualified teachers and polluted learning environment. In the face of a dismal lack of these vital resources, heads of schools efforts to administer schools diligently will be thwarted. Likely outcomes of this kind of situation include recalcitrant pupils, non-literate population and a subdued teaching workforce to name a few. Many primary schools in Ebonyi State are not exempt from this sour state of affairs. Many are challenged by a constant outbreak of unruly behaviour on the part of pupils, a constant lack of educational amenities as well as an overpopulation of pupils. The utility of this study is couched within the above statement especially against the determination that while few studies have been conducted on primary schools management in Nigeria, none has taken an interest in its administration by school heads especially in Ebonyi State of Nigeria.

Created in 1996, Ebonyi State is located in the South-eastern part of Nigeria. It was carved out of the old Abakaliki division of Enugu State and the Old Afikpo division of Abia State. Sanni (2010:1) says that creating states and local government areas is enormously popular in Nigeria as a means of redressing the imbalance in socio-economic development among the component units of Nigeria. Afikpo South is a new local government and can be considered a semi-rural area.

Statement of the Problem

In the day-to-day administration of their schools, heads of schools face myriad administrative problems which militate against the effective running of their schools. These may range from lack of qualified and dedicated teachers, insufficient funding to maintain schools and paying teachers' salaries, and interference by parents. Others include lack of accommodation for pupils, indiscipline on the part of teachers and pupils and uncooperative attitudes of other school staff. Where the heads fail to arrest these situations, the smooth running of primary schools is compromised. How far the above problems exist and their effect on the administration of primary schools is the focus of this study. In addressing the problem, the following research questions were raised:

1. To what extent would threats to school heads authority constitute administrative problems?
2. In what ways does staffing become an administrative problem for the school head?
3. To what extent does finance constitute administrative problem for the school?
4. To what extent does lack of facilities affect the administration of primary schools?
5. To what extent does supervision help to facilitate the administration of schools?
6. To what extent does over-population become an administrative problem for the school head?
7. To what extent does lack of co-operation affect the heads' relation with teachers and community?
8. To what extent are the effects of indiscipline on the administration of primary schools?

Purpose of Study

On the basis of the above research questions, the purposes of this study are therefore:

1. To investigate the extent at which threats to school heads authority constitute administrative problems;
2. To determine the extent at which staffing becomes an administrative problems for school heads;
3. To determine the extent at which funding affects administration of primary schools;
4. To explore how lack of physical facilities and location of schools affect the administration of primary schools;
5. To determine the extent at which over-population of pupils constitutes an administrative problem for schools heads;
6. To find out how lack of co-operation on the part of parents, teachers and others affect the work of the school heads; and
7. To determine the extent of the effect of indiscipline on the administration of primary schools.

Review of Literature

Lipham and Hoeh (1990) outline the following five functions of school administration:

I. Staff personnel administration;
II. Student personnel administration;
III. Finance and physical resources; and
IV. School community relationship management.

The above fit well with the objectives of this study. Therefore, review of literature will be organised under the following headings: staffing, finance, indiscipline, supervision, lack of facilities and student population.

Staffing

Odia and Omofonmwan (2007) argue intensely that acute shortage of teachers can result in poor outcome in teaching and learning. They also called for a revitalisation of the education programme in Nigeria through research, manpower training and development. Staffing is considered by many researchers as a vital part of the functioning of any organisation, including a school. Nel et al. (2008) calls staffing 'a technique used by an organisation to place the right person in the right position'. Steyn and Niekerk (2007) describe it as the process which ensures that the best available person is appointed to a vacant position. Appointing someone to a vacant position requires a careful determination of the job description as well as job specification. Grobler et al. (2008) define job description as the document that describes and or details what a job is about and how the job is executed. Usually an outcome of a job analysis, job description can empower school administrators to assemble a team of well qualified and dedicated staff. Urban areas in general are invariably more endowed with public services and infrastructure than rural areas (Njoh 2003), hence it is safe to assert that living and teaching in rural areas may not be considered attractive in Nigeria, especially when one considers that new states and indeed local governments are created with a view to bring development (Adamolekun 1991:11) to the citizens. Afikpo South local government is considered a semi-rural area with very little development; has a major challenge of adequate supply of public goods and services, and as a result would scarcely attract qualified teachers. It therefore becomes an administrative nightmare to deal with teachers who are in the first place not well processed, motivated and possibly not dedicated. White et al. (2008) and Steele et al. (2010) are of the opinion that rural schools should be made more attractive to work in through the introduction of incentives such as attractive salary packages and other benefits.

Given that the local government in question is not an attractive one, there is a possibility that the number of teachers in the primary schools is not enough to go around, especially with the numbers of pupil enrolment exploding. According to Nakpodia (2011), the success of primary school administration depends on the availability of teachers. This suggests that for proper running of a primary school, quality and efficiency of staff determine to a great extent the successful achievement of its educational objectives.

Finance

One of the biggest challenges of primary school management is poor funding. The extent to which adequate educational programmes are achieved depends largely on the economic provisions supporting the programme. Shortage of money or inadequate funds often leads to large

classes for teachers, meagre libraries, few instructional supplies, cheap building constructions and poorly trained teachers. Omwami and Keller (2010) are in agreement that because most sub-Saharan African countries depend on foreign financial aid, it is not surprising that African economies will be unable to provide universal access to education because their national budgets lack the capacity to do so. It is even argued surreptitiously that funds meant for primary schools were grossly misused because there was lack of commitment and good financial administration on the part of officials. Insufficient funds to maintain schools and pay teachers' salaries are among other factors that militate against the smooth administration of primary schools. The lack of sufficient funding puts enormous pressure on school heads, because as Anderson and Lumby (2005) point out, there is a high degree of pressure on school heads to raise funds so that their schools are fully functional. For a country with a large population [such as Nigeria] and a failing economy, the challenge of financing public education is enormous (Omwami and Keller 2010).

Facilities

In 2006, Aluede warned that large number of primary schools suffered an immense deprivation of facilities that support teaching and learning. In a study conducted by Adepoju and Fabiyi (2007), it revealed the following: 12% of pupils sat on the floor; 38% of the classrooms have no ceilings; while 87% of the classrooms were overcrowded. With poor funding, the few classrooms built on some of the primary school grounds decay faster as a result of poor maintenance. This kind of situation has consistently presented enormous challenges to school heads. Ozigi (1977) believes that it is the duty of the headmaster to see to it that essential and basic equipment and materials are provided in adequate quantity and in good time. The headmaster should ensure that the building, ground and other physical facilities are well maintained and used. Lack of these vital materials is a source of frustration and annoyance as well as meaningless teaching results.

Supervision

Lack of supervision and monitoring of schools are regarded as the major drawbacks in the education sector (Edho 2009). Owoeye (1999) asserted among other factors, that effective supervision was an important virtue that teachers should uphold effectively in the school system. A failure to appropriately supervise instruction on the part of teachers might result in the failure of supervisory programme, which is a critical factor for school administration. This failure might be a result of the leadership style of a school head. Adeyemi (2010), in his study of principals' leadership styles and teacher's job performance suggested that a mix of autocratic and democratic styles of leadership influenced teacher's performance in schools. Essentially his study found that teachers performed better under autocratic heads. Teachers are not the only ones deserving supervision. School heads do require supervision. As Nwaogu (1980) noted 'supervision ... plays an essential role in deciding the nature and content of curriculum, in selecting the school organisational patterns and learning materials to facilitate teaching and evaluating the entire educational process'. The person who is tasked with the above responsibility is the school head (Adeyemi 2010: 83). In spite of the significance of supervision as a laudable means of evaluating the effectiveness of schools, it is disturbing to note that it is irregularly conducted (Ezekwesili 2007). Edho (2009) however blames this poor response to supervision on inadequate vehicles for monitoring, poor funding for supervision and inadequate number of qualified school supervisors.

Over Population

As far back as 1983, Marg Csapo warned that a tidal wave of swiftly swelling pupil enrolment was the bane of Nigerian educational administrators, which was blamed on the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme launched in September 1976. Oni (2009) narrates the despicable state of over-population through the experience of a one-time federal minister of education in Nigeria thus: *In one state capital, I witnessed an appalling situation where three classes made up of a total of 200 children were sitting in the sun facing one blackboard.* This perhaps meant that as a result of overpopulation, pupils could not be accommodated in the classrooms prompting an outside of classroom location.

Political parties dangle the carrot of free primary education during election campaigns. Ken-

ya and Malawi are examples (Omwami and Keller 2010). In Nigeria, free primary education is enshrined in the universal primary education review of 1985 (Amaghionyeodiwe and Osinubi 2006). The sad development from the Nigerian free primary education experience is that both federal and local governments have consistently failed to consider the impact of an increase in enrolment on the school's physical facilities. To expand enrolment without investing in infrastructure only causes the quality of education to decline (Omwami and Keller 2010).

School Head – Teacher Relationship

Quality assurance in schools is achieved if teachers, who are tasked with the provision of essential inputs such as adequate planning for lesson notes, effective delivery of lessons, proper monitoring and evaluation of students' performance, provision of regular feedback on students performance, adequate record keeping and appropriate discipline of students, take their jobs seriously (Ayeni 2012). Research has shown that cooperation among colleagues in all sectors derives from trust, respect for one another and helpful feedback. A healthy relationship between school heads and their teachers can result in an increase in teacher job performance, reduced incidence of pupil indiscipline and an improvement in school-community relationship. School teachers should be made to feel that they can reach out to the school head with their complaints and receive support. A positive school climate is one that has the necessary resources for teaching support. This is the claim of Oghuvbu (2009) who is also of the opinion that sound, qualitative primary education is a foundation for brighter secondary and higher education. In fact Adeyemi (2010) points out that the way a school head relates with his or her staff could have a positive or negative impact on the staff's productivity levels.

School – Community Relationship

The school head is in a unique position as the manager or administrator who controls school's resources for the purpose of attaining his schools' goals (Adeyemi 2010: 83). Sadly, this unique position is threatened by a severe lack of qualified and dedicated teachers, cooperative community and a general lack of school resources. Ayeni (2010) insists that in pursuit of quality teaching and learning, schools must see themselves as open systems deriving its energies from a network of relationships including those of host communities. Communities can be a school's greatest friend and friendly critic or its greatest adversary. This is the opinion of Nwaogu (1980) who adds that any school, irrespective of where it is located, needs the cooperation of its host community. School and community partnership is a two-way process of relationship in which members of the school and communities share common values, aspirations, beliefs, instructional practices and improvement in students' learning outcomes (Ayeni 2012). Ayeni goes further to say that good community relations enables schools to receive learning resources, enabling environments and possibly attract competent and professional educationists from the community to the school. After all, on graduation, learners are released as outputs to their immediate communities. This suggests that if a healthy relationship exists between the school and its host community, it becomes almost possible for the community to absorb the graduate knowing that they have followed the child's learning programme from day one.

Indiscipline

Education, according to Fafunwa (1979) is the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour that present value to his society. Education can happen within or outside a formal school programme. Schools act as an instrument of society, utilised for the teaching of young ones (Ayeni 2012). Poor results have been blamed on falling standards as well as the inability of teachers and school heads to enforce discipline in schools. In fact, one of the reasons for the introduction of the universal basic education in Nigeria was the sharp decline in the morality of primary school children (Edho 2009). The enforcement of discipline through corporal means is now decried around the world. When teachers are unable to enforce discipline as a result of conflicting values, the teachers feel insecure. This is the opinion of Nakpodia (2010) who examined teachers disciplinary approaches to students' discipline problems in Nigerian secondary schools. However, Asiyai (2012) found two major causes of pupil indiscipline. First was the constant negative labelling of pupils followed by teachers' lateness, ab-

senteeism, poor school environment and poor teaching. No doubt though that discipline and pupil control (Onuka and Arowojolu 2008) are never easy to maintain, it demands co-operation, wisdom, tack, courage, fairness and firmness. Much of these seem to pose serious challenges to the school heads. Perhaps falling academic standards (Adebayo 2009) coupled with a lack of authority to provide discipline and or unqualified interference from governments and parents push some parents into considering private schools in Nigeria.

In conclusion, the above mentioned factors constitute problems for school heads in the administration of schools. This work shows how the factors enumerated above constitute problems in the administration of primary schools in Afikpo South local government area of Ebonyi State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population

Of the 210 headmasters and headmistresses identified in the local government area, only 160 (76%) of them participated in the study. This suggests that all heads of schools in the area were targeted (census), but only 160 participated.

Instrument for Data Collection

This study was guided by eight research questions and twenty- four questionnaire items to elicit the following: Threats to school head's authority; staffing problems; inadequate school finance; acute shortage of facilities; over-population; supervision; effect of lack of co-operation between heads of schools and teachers on one hand and heads of schools and parents of pupils on the other; and problem of indiscipline.

Initially, all the items in the questionnaire were based on the testable assumptions postulated in the research questions, albeit content validity was assigned to educational administration practitioners in Nigeria and South Africa. Suggestions provided by these experts were incorporated into the final draft of the questionnaire. Each questionnaire item required an answer of 'Yes' or 'No' from the respondents. A 'Yes' answer signified a positive response, while a 'No' answer represented a negative response.

Method of Data Collection

The researchers made personal contact with some of the headmasters and headmistresses, who consented to participating in the study. Considering that many of the schools were loosely scattered in what one might consider exceedingly remote areas of the local government, the researchers were fortunate to be invited to a meeting of heads of schools which took place in the local government area during the time of the study. Those who could not be reached at the meeting were later handed out questionnaires at their places of work. Another helpful tool that was utilised in collecting data was interview. The researchers used this method to further gather data especially in order to get clarity with regard to the responses to some items in the questionnaire. For instance, the researchers wanted to know the average number of pupils in each class and how this impacted on teachers' responsibilities.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis was realised through the use of frequency counts and simple percentages. This is a form of descriptive research, which Babbie (2012) argues, has the capability of putting into perspective, the context in which a problem exists. Illustration of the findings was done using Microsoft Excel application software. Response 'yes' was classified as positive and response 'no' as negative.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1 shows that 52% of the heads are threatened by pupils' parents, 90% by the board,

Table 1: Threats to school head's authority

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
1.	Heads are often threatened by parents when their children are punished	52	52	48	48	100
2.	Board frowns at school heads for collecting levies from pupils	90	90	10	10	100
3.	Reports of erring teachers are not taken seriously by school authorities	75	75	25	25	100

Table 2: Staffing problem

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
4.	Is your school understaffed?	50	50	50	50	100
5.	Are some of your teachers on in-service training or youth corp members?	60	60	40	40	100
6.	Do you have adequate number of subject teachers	60	60	40	40	100
7.	Do you teach a class?	80	80	20	20	100

Table 3: Finance problems

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
8.	Do you regularly receive financial assistance from government and parents?	45	45	55	55	100
9.	Sale of art and craft serve as additional source of funding for the school	40	40	60	60	100
10.	Parents unduly interfere in matters regarding school funds	55	55	45	45	100

Table 4: Facilities

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
11.	There are enough functional classrooms and offices	20	20	80	80	100
12.	Provision of textbooks and other learning aids	45	45	55	55	100
13.	Adequate provision of furniture	48	48	52	52	100
14.	School property is adequately protected	40	40	60	60	100

Table 5: Problem of student population

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
15.	Number of pupils per class	63	63	37	37	100
16.	Problem of pupil control	62	62	38	38	100

Table 6: Effective supervision

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
17.	Creating new roles to help ease school heads' administration challenges	57	57	43	43	100
18.	Regular supervision of schools by government authorities	42	42	58	58	100

Table 7: School heads/teachers/community relations

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
19.	School head enjoys good relations with staff	15	15	85	85	100
20.	School head enjoys good relations with community	37	37	63	63	100

Table 8: Problem of indiscipline

S.No.	Item	Yes	%	No	%	Total
21.	Teachers are effective and dedicated to their duties	30	30	70	70	100
22.	Pupils are truant	53	53	47	47	100
23.	Teacher enjoys good relationship with pupils	65	65	35	35	100
24.	Use of corporal punishment to check indiscipline	49	49	51	51	100

and 75% by education officers and supervisors who do not take headmasters reports seriously. But 48%, 10% and 25% respectively have no such problems.

Table 2 shows that 50% of the heads of schools have problems of under-staffing, 60% have some teachers on in-service training. While 60% do not have adequate number of subject teachers, 80% of them do teach.

Table 3 shows that 55% have no financial assistance from the board and P.T.A., 40% raise funds from sale of art and craft, while 55% are disturbed by parents with regard to the use of school money.

Table 4 shows that 80% of the school lack functional school building and classroom, 55% have no adequate provision of textbooks and

other materials. 52% of the schools lack adequate furniture, while 60% have no security for school property.

The interviews with majority of the heads of schools revealed that each class should ideally have between 25 -35 pupils. However, this is not the case as most classes had above 40 pupils per class. Table 5 shows that 63% of the schools have more than the required number of pupils per class while 37% has less. 38% have no problem of pupil control.

Table 6 indicates that 57% of the heads agree that creation of new supervisory roles will help to ease administration, while 42% agree that there is regular supervision by external supervisors.

In Table 7, 15% of the headmasters enjoy good staff working relationship while 37% enjoy the co-operation of host community.

Table 8 indicates that 70% of the school heads do not have effective and dedicated staff, 53% suffers pupil truancy, and 65% have good pupil teacher relationship. 51% do not resort to corporal punishment in checking indiscipline among pupils.

DISCUSSION

From the data, the researchers found that parents sometimes confront school heads in the day to day running of the schools especially in the area of discipline and use of schools money. Ayeni (2012) considers schools as planned social organisations that act as instruments of society for teaching young ones and should therefore rely on mutual interrelationships within and outside their relevant publics. The primary school management board has banned all forms of levies without any substitute for the heads to follow. Most supplies of school materials are not forthcoming from the board. School heads are faced with problems of providing such materials as chalk and writing materials. The headmasters work is made more difficult and unpleasant. The study discovered that acute shortage of staff has negative effect on school administration. The study also revealed that many schools are understaffed and are still facing inadequate subject teachers. The pupil-teacher ratio of over forty (40) per class shows that teachers are over laboured while pupils are not given adequate attention. Edho (2009) acknowledged this problem and suggested the establishment of more schools to deal with the increased enrolment rate.

Most heads of schools are forced to teach some classes in addition to their official work of administration. It was discovered that fifty five percent (55%) of the schools have inadequate school finance since the board and parents are unable to financially aid the schools. Lack of funds makes it difficult for the school heads to deal with minor repairs. The effect of a situation of this nature is that most schools are in bad shape. This is consistent with Edho's (2009) assessment of challenges affecting the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Delta State of Nigeria.

This study is of the opinion that students' rise in enrolment has created more problems for many of the school heads. Since most schools lack adequate classrooms and furniture, the administrators are faced with the problem of where and how to accommodate pupils and teachers. In most rural schools the heads beg for accommodation in churches. In most cases their appeals to the community to put up temporary sheds and classrooms have fallen on deaf ears. Since the classes are not conducive to effective learning, the pupils feel insecure. This has a serious effect on school administration. This finding is consistent with Duflo et al. (2012). In some schools that hold classes outside of the school premises, truancy on the part of the pupils was found to be a problem. Most of the pupils are seen bringing their seats from home while others use windows and floors as their seats. In cases where seats are far inadequate, pupils fight and create problems for the school authorities. High numbers of enrolment put pressure on meagre school facilities. Heads of schools, teachers and pupils are affected by a general lack of facilities. In schools where pupils hold classes outside the normal classrooms and in some cases, outside the school compound, it becomes more difficult for school heads to have adequate supervision of such classes. From our findings, there is a need for more effective supervision of schools to ease problems of school administration. Teacher's dedication to work, physical facilities and use of appropriate medium of instruction were implicated by Mji and Makgato (2006) as part of the reasons for poor performance of learners in South Africa. More effective supervision by education authorities can help turn this around. Onuka and Arowojolu (2008) concur in their evaluation of parents' patronage of private primary schools in Abeokuta, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that primary education is very important in Nigeria's education system because it not only lays a sound foundation for scientific and reflective thinking, but it also serves as the foundation upon which other strata of educational edifice are built. While paying specific attention to Ebonyi State in Nigeria, this study sought to determine the extent at which several challenges inhibit the effective management of primary schools in Nigeria. Utilizing a self-administered questionnaire, the study found among others, that parents' constant confrontation with school heads in the day to day running of schools does have an impact on relationships both within and outside the schools. There was also an issue around funding. This study found that poor funding hampered the smooth running of the schools because it inhibits the recruitment of qualified staff, often resulting in acute shortage of staff, which forces most heads of schools to teach some classes in addition to their official workload. A study of this nature presents some benefits in that it indicates some operational and strategic issues which hamper the effective management of primary schools in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Primary school management board should relax some of its policies to allow school heads to function. Provision of adequate and qualified teachers must be a conscious programme of both government and heads of schools. Effective teaching and learning take place with high quality teachers. The government of Ebonyi state should encourage teachers to go for further studies in order to update their knowledge. The school heads should be released from classes so that they can concentrate on administration of their schools. Federal, state and local governments should take the financial problem of primary schools as a matter of great concern. They should provide enough funds to make facilities available in our primary schools. Facilities such as functional school buildings, functional libraries, textbooks and storage facilities should be provided. This can help relieve the problem that comes with pupil over population because the researchers have seen the need to put up additional classrooms and repairs of the existing structures to accommodate the ever increasing pupils' population. Regular supervision of schools especially those in the rural areas is an important element in the administration of schools. Until recently, most school heads have not had the impact of such supervision. Effective supervision is felt by school heads in urban cities. Schools and their host communities must join hands to rid the schools of some of the setbacks encountered by schools. Communities can help to project a good image for the schools in their communities. By so doing, schools can attract reputable teachers as well as increased support of government. In cases of serious misconducts, communities and schools can join hands in providing moral leadership and training. Essentially, communities can assist schools in dealing with cases of misconduct.

Successful administration of primary schools is possible with qualified and dedicated teachers, well equipped primary schools, expansion of schools to accommodate the increasing enrolment of pupils and a co-operative community incorporating parents of pupils.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The remote location of many of the schools was a source of challenge to the researchers. The researchers also had an uncomfortable sense that some heads of schools were not comfortable to entertain interview moments with the researchers given the number of times different locations were chosen. This perhaps provides the argument that future study should look at an exclusive location where heads of schools are able to provide answers without the prying eyes of other colleagues. Further study could also look at the hindrances surrounding community-school heads smooth relations.

This study was descriptive by design. A research of this nature may benefit from a more rigorous debate through a critique of the literature and an in-depth analysis of results utilising SPSS and or any other statistical tool.

REFERENCES

Adamolekun L 1991. Introduction: Federalism in Nigeria. *Publius,* 2(14): 1-11.

Adebayo FA 2009. Parents' preference for private secondary schools in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education Science*, 1(1):1-6.

Adepoju A, Fabiyi A 2007. Universal Basic Education in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. From <http://uaps2007.princeton.edu/download. aspx? submissionId=70830> (Retrieved July 10, 2012).

Adesina AE 2011. Perceived impact of primary education on the attainment of Nigeria Vision 2020. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(5): 61-69.

Adeyemi T O 2010. Principals' leadership styles and teachers' job performance in senior secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, 2(6): 83-91.

Aluede ROA 2006. Universal basic education in Nigeria: Matters arising. *Journal of Human Ecology*, 20(2): 97-101.

Amaghionyeodiwe LA, Osinubi TS 2006. The Nigerian educational system and returns to education. *Journal of Applied Econometrics and Quantitative Studies*, 3(1): 31-40.

Anderson L, Lumby J (Eds.) 2005. *Managing Finance and External Relations in South African Schools*. London: The Commonwealth Secretariat.

Asiyai RI 2012. Indiscipline in Nigerian secondary schools: Types, causes and possible solutions. *African Journal of Education and Technology*, 2(1): 39-47.

Ayeni AJ 2010. *Teachers' Instructional Task Performance and Principals' Supervisory Roles as Correlates of Quality Assurance in Secondary Schools in Ondo State*. Ph.D Thesis, Unpublished. Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

Ayeni AJ 2012. Improving school and community partnership for sustainable quality assurance in secondary schools in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 1(2): 95-102.

Babbie ER 2012. *The Practice of Social Research*. Belmont CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Csapo M 1983. Universal primary education in Nigeria: Its problems and implications. *African Studies Review*, 26(1): 91-106.

Duflo E, Dupas P, Kremer M 2012. School Governance, Teacher Incentives, and Pupil-Teacher Ratios: Experimental Evidence from Kenyan Primary Schools. *Working Paper 17939*. National Bureau of Economic Research.

Edho OG 2009. The challenges affecting the implementation of the universal basic education (UPE) in Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 20(3): 183-187.

Ezekwesili O 2007. Reinventing Education. *Vanguard Newspaper*, January 4, 2007,P.47.

Fafunwa AB 1991. *History of Education in Nigeria*. Ibadan: NPS Educational Publishers.

Federal Government of Nigeria 1977. *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information.

Federal Government of Nigeria 2004. *National Policy on Education* (Revised). Yaba: NERC Press.

Grobler PA, Warnich S, Carrell MR, Elbert NF, Hatfield RD 2006. *Human Resource Management in South Africa*. 4th Edition. Australia: South-Western.

Igbuzor O 2006. *The* State of Education in Nigeria. *A Keynote Address Delivered at a Roundtable Organised by Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for all*, July 3, 2006.

Lipham JM, Hoeh JA 1990. *The Principalship and Functions*. New York: Harper and Row.

Mji A, Makgato M 2006. Factors associated with high school learners' poor performance: A spotlight on mathematics and physical science. *South African Journal of Education*, 26(2): 253-266.

Nakpodia ED 2010. Teachers' disciplinary approaches to students' discipline problems in Nigerian secondary schools. *International NGO Journal*, 5(6): 144-151.

Nakpodia ED 2011. Teacher factors in the implementation of universal basic education programme in junior secondary schools in the south senatorial district of Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 3(10): 286-293.

Nel PS, Werner A, Haasbroek GD, Poisat P, Sono T, Schultz HB 2008. *Human Resources Management*. 7th Edition. Cape Town: Oxford.

Njoh AJ 2003. Urbanization and development in sub-Saharan Africa. *Cities,* 20(3): 167-174.

Nwaogu JI 1980. *A Guide to Supervision of Instruction in Nigerian Schools*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension.

Odia LO Omofonmwan SI 2007. Educational system in Nigeria. Problems and prospects. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(1): 81-86.

Oghuvbu EP 2009. Analysis of Resources Management in Primary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria. Academic Leadership Journal.7(1). From <http://www.academicleadership.org/296/analysis-of-resources-management-in-primary-schools-in-delta-state-nigeria/> (Retrieved July 11, 2012).

Omwami EM, Keller EJ 2010. Public funding and budgetary challenges to providing universal access to primary education in sub-Saharan Africa. *International Review of Education*, 56: 5-31.

Oni JO 2009. Management of primary education in Nigeria: Trends, constraints and solutions. *The Social Sciences*, 4(3): 286-290.

Onuka AO, Arojowolu AF 2008. An evaluation of parents' patronage of private primary schools in Abeokuta, Nigeria. *International Journal of African and African-American Studies,* 7(2): 58-70.

Owoeye NO 1999. *The Influence of Job Satisfaction on Job Performance of Staff in the Broadcasting Service of Ekiti State and Ondo State Radio Corporation*. M.Ed Thesis, Unpublished. Ondo State University, Ado Ekiti.

Ozigi AO 1977. *A Handbook on School Administration and Management*. London: Macmillan.

Quadri K 2001. *Introduction to Primary Education Studies*. Ibadan: Glory Land Publishing.

Sanni L 2010. People's perceived developmental impacts of creating states and local government areas in southwestern Nigeria. *Journal of Human Ecology,* 31(1): 1-11.

Steele JL, Murname RJ, Willet JB 2010. Do financial incentives help low-performing schools attract and keep academically talented teachers? Evidence from California. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management,* 29(3): 451-478.

Steyn GM, van Niekerk EJ 2007. *Human Resource Management in Education*. 2nd Edition. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

White S, Green B, Reid J, Lock G, Hastings W, Cooper M 2008. Teacher Education for Rural Communities: A Focus on 'Incentives'. *Paper presented at the Australian Teachers Education Association (ATEA) Conference,* Sunshine Coast, Australia, 8 to 11 July, 2008.